

Noxious Weed Advisory Committee Meeting  
September 3, 2009  
Upper Colorado Environmental Plant Center  
Meeker, CO

- Meeting commenced at 8:15am
- In attendance: Don Hajar, Jay Jutton, Jimmy Dunn, Kelly Uhing, Nicole Simpson, Crystal Andrews, Heather Knight, Steve Anthony, Susan Spackman Panjabi, Phyllis Lake, Karen Scopel, Jim Walker, Hal Pearce, and Holly Postmus.
  - Members excused: Tom McClure, Bill Wilkinson, Roc Rutledge, and Scott Nissen
- Welcome and recognize visitors and organizers
- Review agenda-call for additions and or corrections
  - No corrections
- Review minutes of last meeting-call for additions, corrections and acceptance
  - Jimmy Dunn was present at last meeting and Karen was excused. Jay motioned to approve minutes, John seconded, all in favor. Minutes plus corrections accepted.
- Local Speakers:
  - Hal Pearce, Noxious Weed Program Manager, White River National Forest
    - 1 ½ yrs ago, it was decided a forest wide weed manager was needed. Hal is now in charge of the entire forest and hoping to achieve a level of consistency throughout. Hoping to ramp up agreements with counties, as the majority have expired. Looking to get a permanent position in Dillon (none at this time) with a crew of 2-4, at Meeker and Holy Cross/ Eagle. The biggest problem in the valley is yellow toadflax, but working with CSU on using herbicide mixes within the current restrictions. Contact with Dupont on different concentrations for spot spraying. Hal's time oversees weed program 80% and about 20% for the range program, such as grazing permits, etc. Kelly asked about cooperative agreements with CDOT? Hal, not right now the only one still in effect is with Rio Blanco (Holly) because the others have expired. Would like to create a buffer for Russian knapweed at the Glenwood Canyon and stop it from spreading beyond even more. Hal is trying to get more involved with the ski areas as well, but it's more of an educational process internally and externally. John questioned what type of posters and brochures are available about noxious weeds for bulletin boards. Hal, indicated there aren't many at all. Susan asked Hal about taking into account wildlife habitat and figuring out where to work next as well as priority areas. Hal responded that we take that into account, number one priority is anything new, then areas of high vectors of spread – trail heads, campgrounds, etc., small infestations, then wildlife habitats usually get about 20K every year from Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation so that is geared towards the wildlife. It's pretty much all about habitat. Eagle County – Steve Elzinga – will be joining the forest service ranks to work in Eagle, Holy Cross area.
  - Holly Postmus, Rio Blanco County Weed Supervisor
- Largest problem is leafy spurge in the area. It's a constant financial burden, county has a 75% cost share program to assist landowners with leafy spurge infestations. There is a helicopter program that can also assist with spraying. \$850 an hour for flight time, so it is rather costly to have the helicopter get to the hard ridge areas. This year about 1,800 acres has been sprayed by the copter, about 1,600 of those are just leafy spurge. The average cost is \$41/acre. Of course it

would be nice to see the costs lowered in the future. Other problems are isolated patches of perennial pepperweed, hoary cress, black henbane, spotted and diffuse knapweed, and lots of thistle (most popular besides spurge). 50% cost share for the other weeds. Significant purchase costs goes towards chemicals. There were six slots this year for seasonal help and were able to fill them. For the most part the oil and gas areas stay pretty clean, most complaints from amongst neighbors of oil and gas. Cooperative efforts will greatly improve the situation. Next year the state and private forestry grant will be a good avenue to apply for more financial aid. Holly was able to purchase a boat to be able to go up the river and map and see what kinds of problems are there. So far no negative response from letter that was sent out. The next grant money will be able to be in used in the up river areas. Holly will spend a lot of time working on getting grants so funding is there for more projects. Kelly mentioned the presence of a county commissioner yesterday on the tour, Holly said they are very helpful. Susan asked about what thistles are the big concerns – Holly said the plumeless, lots of Canada and then musk and Scotch thistle. Hal – the thistles seem to be eradicable. Crystal – how is the infestation of black henbane, Holly – it's pretty scattered, one area in particular on hwy 103 that is dealing with it. Hal – most henbane is on roads leading into forest areas. County agreement with Rio Blanco really helps get things done, so if you stumble across something it gets taken care of immediately. Holly – received call from NRCS office, complaint that a neighbor was planting Russian olives. Holly made contact by sending a letter describing the law about Russian olive, including brochures about it, and offered help and assistance to figure out what to do about it (treatment, replacement, etc.). Owner was really upset and came to office to fight it. Letter came from attorney today from first “nice” letter sent out. It was not even an enforcement issue.

- Old business:
  - Sub-committee reports: Heather asked for general feedback on the structure, etc. of the sub-committees. Would shifting the timing of the meetings make any difference to that? Steve – decide whether meetings should be more to field tours or more just workload? Crystal – suggest just readjust workload depending on busy times. Jay – field trips help keep group motivated and learn more about the problems out there. Kelly – the purpose of the statewide meetings and tours for the committee is to learn about the local perspective and give the community opportunities to inform the committee about what is going on and how decisions the committee makes have a positive or negative impact on local programs. Phyllis – listening to locals really gives them the hope that someone is listening, though no immediate answers, it is being worked on. Don – it's just the situation, hard times have meant many of us have more to do and less resources to use. Heather – the list is just a priority list of tasks and it's up to each sub-committee to prioritize the list and just go one at a time. Karen – list needs to be fluid to adjust where something new comes in and some things have road blocks. John – it is very important to get around and learn a lot on these trips. Heather – the lists should be a working/changing document.
    - Weed Science and Management
      - Kelly: Plant Assessment Form (PAF) funding – approval was given to fund the CSU Weed Lab \$12K to conduct risk assessments for approximately 40 plant species. The results of these assessments will be provided to the Committee who will then make recommendations to the Ag Commission on which species should be added to the State Noxious Weed List. Having the scientific community complete these forms will provide accurate results with objective information. \$65K was

distributed in weed grants from the Weed Trust Fund for 2009. \$35K remains in the Trust Fund. A portion of that balance (\$12K) will be used to fund CSU staff to conduct the assessments.

- Tree of heaven – Dr. George Beck is urging the committee to recommend Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) be declared noxious in Colorado. George had run this species through the PAF but there is not much anecdotal information from Colorado. The main concern is potential damage to homes, businesses, and municipal infrastructure. Kelly suggested listing this species as it could raise noxious weed awareness and the State Weed Law awareness with municipalities. Karen urged that the Front Range Urban Forestry Council and the State Forest Service participate in this process as well. Contact would be Ralph Campbell in forest service. The landowner who initially requested the Committee declare Tree of Heaven noxious, believes that if it is on the noxious weed list then the City of Boulder will be able to enforce. Debate was discussed on placing it on the list as compared to other species that may be more worthy of listing. The poor economy is a factor, if we add every other specie to the list this could lead to already tight weed program budgets to be overburdened. Susan – suggested classifying it as a List B in order to contain the plant and prevent its spread (invasive) into natural areas. But it's hard to determine, since it is mostly urban invasion, where the point of the weed list is more natural areas and agriculture. Kelly – the lack of anecdotal data for Colorado can possibly lead to inconsistent assessment results. Agree need to stay consistent with PAF, but how do we adjust data that does not include the invasiveness of natural environments because it has not yet happened. Karen – has the plant moved into the nature areas of Boulder, and Dr. Beck's information indicates that it is in urban areas only. Jay – maybe George can come to next meeting and provide more information for us. Don – suggest that we send letter to City of Boulder that the plant is a problem that we are not adding it to the state list, but that the County should. Crystal – this seems like a great way to get an educational campaign out there. Jim – the Cooperative Extension offices can release information about any tree next to foundation, maybe even the realtors association. Kelly – consider tabling this to November meeting and invite George to the next meeting. Susan, Kelly, and Crystal will meet with George Beck and Scott Nissen from CSU to review the form to ensure it is providing appropriate data to aid in the decision-making process. The Committee will request that George conducts another assessment for Tree of Heaven with the new information gained from his field observations. Karen will get feedback from forestry group. Motioned by Susan, seconded by Jay. All in favor, motion passes.
- Spruce gulch tabled for when Tom McClure is here to present.
- Site Led Approach update on restructuring Goal #4 in Colorado's Strategic Plan to Stop the Spread of Noxious Weeds:
  - Susan – on page 13, goal #4: reads now to restore lands of exceptional agricultural value...should also include "protect" lands from noxious

weeds as well as restoring areas that are degraded. What this sub-committee is working on is to go beyond the direction provided in the Weed Act to provide guidance for determining priority areas in Colorado for weed control efforts. They will develop a recommended approach for that determination and is intended for use by any individual, organization, or agency with a limited weed control budget. Don – what does the exceptional part mean. Susan – that is the main focus of the sub-committee is to determine what makes areas exceptional. We have created a list of several factors for consideration in prioritizing specific areas for weed control work including; size (larger project areas are preferred over smaller ones), multiple properties, natural area designations, areas with important natural resource values, important agricultural designations, partnerships, planning, and restoration. Don suggested class one soils to be included for prime agricultural designations. Heather suggested water resources, land, restoration, etc. Kelly is meeting with Matt Pollart with the State Land Board to learn about their ranking process for stewardship properties. Susan – this can be helpful to anyone giving money towards weeds to assist them in sorting through the projects. Heather suggests adding properties that buffer natural areas. Susan reiterated that this is used as a tool AFTER prioritizing from the weed list.

▪ Funding and Policy

- Steve: lobbying relationship with CWMA, need to bump up resources to hire before January 2010 meeting to get things going before the next session begins. Seed act and weed act are being worked on by Steve (putting in a spreadsheet)(including weed free forage list). Susan, what's the big picture on comparing these lists. Steve: to get a closer look at the big picture and have everything that is on the Noxious weed list is also on the Nursery and Seed Act lists. Susan – just draft a letter with recommendations, Kelly can take it and discuss with Division of Plant Industry (DPI) director, and see where it goes from there and how to process it. Heather – invite appropriate DPI staff to our next meeting to go over this idea and get their feedback and then write a letter of recommendation. Don seconded, all in favor. Motion passes.
- Kelly: have Don Gallegos attend November meeting to go over weed free forage program. Kelly: weed management fund and projects, 65K went out in projects and 12K to CSU PAFs, 23K left able to be used – which Kelly is working on a list of projects it could fund such as a web-based mapping system as well as educational material development.

▪ Communication and education

- Karen – Steve still waiting on the realtor disclosure form. Karen – this meeting jump started some ideas through having a weed outreach packet. Biggest challenge is making the general public aware and passionate about noxious weeds. Phyllis – realtors are most interested in putting a pamphlet together in the community, hospitals, schools, etc. that people can read and learn more about. Heather: if anyone has any good materials out there, send them to Karen and other committee members. The main target audience though are the municipalities and

creating a process to increase noxious weed and state weed law awareness.

▪ State Weed Coordinator

- Noxious Weed Management Team: state and federal agencies meet on a regular basis to increase communication between the groups. Goal to provide regional training workshops (train the trainer format – was originally directed towards federal agency field staff). Scheduled four workshops to be taught by Dr. Beck. Durango, Rocky Ford, Sterling and Grand Junction – worked with local extension offices who use to host the meetings. Interest has been high, especially with field staff from BLM, NRCS, USFS, NPS, BIA (Southern Utes), DOW, CDOT, State Parks, State Land Board, Conservation Districts, etc. The meetings are free but registration had to be capped due to high responses and limited resources to provide class handouts. Hopefully it can be offered again in the spring.
- Changes to the “Rules” for the State Weed Law were approved by the Ag Commission. Therefore, state weed management plans have been developed and adopted for Sulfur cinquefoil, Russian knapweed, and hoary cress. The plans went into effect on Sept. 1, 2009.
- Musk, scotch, & bull thistle and Eurasian watermilfoil are slated for weed management plans for 2010.
- Kelly attended and presented on Col’s Noxious Weed Program to Director Rob Mangold, USFS, during the Region 2 Review meeting. Director Mangold asked Tom McClure and Kelly on the possibility of developing a web-based pilot weed mapping program for Colorado. If successful, it would be incorporated into neighboring state programs. In order for USFS to fund this project out of State and Private Forestry funds, Kelly, Tom, and Crystal will draft a proposal to include not only materials to get it done, but time and effort of trainings, education, etc. Other states have started incorporating web based mapping programs. Kelly, Tom, and Crystal are researching various programs, Imap Invasives, EDDMaps, WIMS, that can be used, and comparing them to include in the proposal. Heather suggested looking into “Conservation track” (Jennifer Harington in Boulder office).
- Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho State Weed Coordinators are working on a joint effort to increase each state’s governors awareness of invasive species and support for a substantial amount of funding to address the issue in the western US. Susan – what’s needed? Kelly – letters would be great from the advisory committee. She will update the committee on when and what is needed, a letter to Commissioner Stulp would be helpful. Karen motions to authorize Heather to draft a letter from this committee to Commissioner Stulp in support of this position. Phyllis seconded, all in favor, motion passes.
- Mediterranean sage was found south of Dolores in Montezuma county. Met with the local county weed manager and his staff, a commercial applicator, and a representative from the local Conservation District to visit the site. The infested area was approximately an acre in size but

plants were scattered lightly throughout. There is concern that the county weed manager did not want to let anyone know of this infestation. Currently, Med sage is known to infest Larimer, Boulder, Garfield, and Montezuma Counties. It is critical that CDA is alerted to all sightings so detailed records can be kept and to ensure that eradication is still a feasible requirement from the State. Locating the source of infestation is vital to eradicating and deal with treating the infestation. Susan – education and information out on new submitting of mapping information, explaining why it is beneficial for them to submit it.

- CDOT update- Jim:
  - Ran out of money for weeds in April, most of the weeds got to seed, but some were able to deal with it. Jefferson county filed a full fledged enforcement of the weeds, had to map the weeds, had to go re-map and spray. Re-mapped again and sprayed (almost 3 times) again to try to deal with it. It was a good example for the rest of CDOT to realize that this can be done and hopefully next spring will have a much better outcome. The allocation of spending funding for weed management needs to be improved so money does not run out before the following spring. That is a crucial time for weed control and July 1<sup>st</sup> is too late to have any optimum effect.
- New business:
  - Review member terms
    - Bill Wilkinson, Roc Rutledge, and John Taylor are expiring terms (max 2 terms) 2010.
    - The folks listed: Eve, Tom, Scott, Steve, Jimmy, Jay, Heather all need to confirm if willing to serve second term or not BEFORE November meeting. Then the committee will need to look for next year's replacements. Fred Raish sent a resignation letter to the committee, due to budget cuts and serving on other committees he was unable to continue to serve on this committee.
  - Formation of EDRR sub-committee
    - Crystal: suggest formation of EDRR sub-committee can be very helpful to the noxious weed advisory committee and there is a lot of room to be doing more in this area. Would love to use current advisory members as well as other members. Crystal would head that committee looking for support/input/etc. Steve volunteered to help with it, as well as Susan. Jimmy motioned to support the committee, Jay seconded, all in favor, motion passes. Members include: Crystal, Susan and Steve. Karen suggested using the education committee to help in any aspects that may be needed.
  - Announcements and notices
    - Susan: September 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Colorado Native Plant Society. Very interesting speakers will be there. Susan has more information or you can look online, though registration has passed – anyone can come to the meeting.
  - Next meeting
    - November 18<sup>th</sup>, in Lakewood.

- Meeting adjournment
  - John motioned, Steve seconded, all in favor. Meeting adjourns 12:00 pm.
- Tour Upper Colorado Environmental Plant Center

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